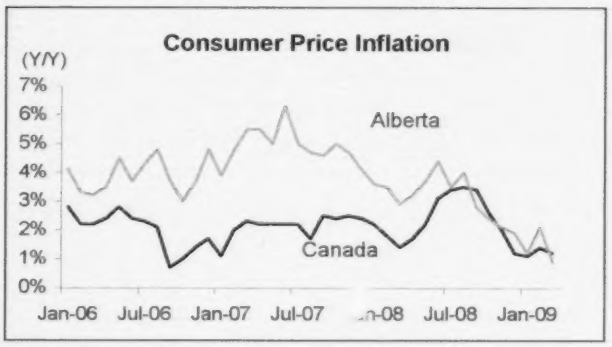
Consumer Price Index

Approaching rock-bottom…

Alberta's year-over-year inflation rate hit 0.9% in March, lower than all other provinces west of Quebec and down substantially from the 2.1% recorded in February. Although food prices climbed by 8.3%, inflation was held down by a 22.1% fall in gasoline prices and a 19.3% fall in natural gas prices. Across Canada, inflation averaged 1.2%, held up by increases of 1.8% in Ontario and Saskatchewan. However, the increase in Ontario was primarily due to rising passenger vehicle insurance premiums.



Manufacturing Shipments

Alberta manufacturing activity falls further…

Alberta manufacturing shipments fell a further 0.7% between January and February, even as overall Canadian shipments increased 2.2% on the strength of a bounce-back in the Ontario auto sector. Lower petroleum and coal product prices continued to hamper Alberta, leading to a 3.3% fall in the national value of sales in that sector: the seventh such decline in the last eight months.

New Motor Vehicle Sales

Double-digit declines…

Alberta and British Columbia were the main contributors to a 2.2% month-over-month decline in Canadian new vehicle sales in February. In Alberta, sales fell by 12.5%. While this was not the highest percentage decline (an honor held by PEI), it was the largest numerical drop. Sales of trucks, vans and buses were hardest hit, with volumes sliding 5.0%. In contrast, sales of passenger cars increased 0.4%.

Canadian Dollar (US¢/CS)	
April 17, 2009	82.33
April 9, 2009	81.47
2009-10 YTD	81.48
WTI Oil US$/bbl	
April 16, 2009	$ 49.98
April 8, 2009	$ 49.38
2009-10 YTD	$ 50.37
Nymex Natural Gas CS/MMBtu *	
Near-month Contract	
April 17, 2009	$ 4.31
April 9, 2009	$ 4.54

* Estimate based on Nymex Futures Market Price

Housing Market

Housing market slows…

On a year-over-year basis, average residential resale prices fell 10.4% in March, bringing the year-to-date decline to 9.9%. The story was similar across both Edmonton and Calgary, where March prices fell by 10.1% and 11.3% respectively. While sales were on the rise between February and March, new listings in Alberta fell substantially on a year-over-year basis, slipping 32.1% in Edmonton and 38.7% in Calgary.

Insolvency Statistics

Insolvencies increase...

Albertan bankruptcy filings and debt restructuring proposals continued to increase in February, up 3.2% from January 2009 and 55.0% from February 2008. Every province, with the exception of PEI, reported an increase in insolvencies, leading to Canadian average month-over-month and year-over-year increases of 14.3% and 25.3% respectively.

US Consumers

Sales contract but sentiment improves…

US retail sales dropped by 1.1% in March, surprising the market after two months of gains. Despite incentives and promotions, auto sector sales continued to decline as well, falling by an additional 2.3%.

On the other hand, the University of Michigan preliminary index of consumer sentiment for April rose to its highest level since September, indicating that the grip of the recession may be finally easing somewhat.

Alberta

CURRENT ECONOMIC INDICATORS

April 17, 2009

Overall Economy	2007	2008	2009YTD*	(year-over-year % change unless otherwise noted) Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Real GDP (in 2002 $billions)	187.5	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
% change	3.1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Nominal GDP ($ billions)	258.9	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
% change	8.1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Population[1] (000's) (level)	3,511	3,585	3,632	3,611	--	--	3,632	--	--
% change	2.6	2.1	2.4	2.4	--	--	2.6	--	--
Net Interprovincial Migraton[1] (level)	33,809	10,010	11,125	4,927	--	--	6,198	--	--
Net International Migration[1] (level)	16,136	19,283	9,004	4,907	--	--	4,097	--	--
Net Non-permanent Residents[1] (level)	13,539	17,890	12,931	8,061	--	--	4,870	--	--
Labour Market									
Employment (000's)	1,959	2,013	2,005	2,035	2,032	2,023	2,026	2,002	1,987
% change	4.7	2.8	0.1	3.2	3.2	1.5	1.2	0.2	-1.0
Unemployment Rate (%)	3.5	3.6	5.2	3.7	3.5	4.2	4.4	5.4	5.8
Average Hourly Wage Rate	6.0	5.7	4.8	6.2	5.0	4.1	6.2	4.5	3.6
Average Weekly Earnings[2]	5.8	6.0	7.9	3.5	7.6	6.3	7.9	--	--
Labour Income[3]	11.3	8.4	--	7.7	7.3	6.8	--	--	--
Price Indices									
Consumer Price Index	5.0	3.1	1.4	2.4	2.1	1.9	1.2	2.1	0.9
Excluding food and energy	4.9	1.9	1.7	1.3	1.8	1.7	1.5	2.0	1.4
Non-Res. Const. Cost Index[4] (quarterly)	17.3	13.2	--	--	8.8 (Q4)	--	--	--	--
Farm Product Price Index	14.3	11.1	-6.0	1.3	-0.9	-4.7	-6.0	--	--
Crops	41.4	26.3	-22.8	-9.2	-14.9	-20.7	-22.8	--	--
Livestock	0.7	2.1	14.2	14.5	17.7	13.5	14.2	--	--
Household Sector									
Housing Starts (SAAR, 000's)	48.1	29.0	14.4	25.2	20.5	20.0	16.7	13.6	12.9
% change	-2.1	-39.7	-64.2	-46.8	-52.7	-48.3	-53.0	-59.4	-75.1
New Housing Price Index	22.5	0.7	-9.0	-4.5	-5.1	-6.1	-8.4	-9.6	--
Edmonton	32.1	1.0	-11.3	-7.7	-7.9	-8.2	-10.4	-12.2	--
Calgary	16.2	0.6	-6.8	-1.6	-2.5	-4.3	-6.5	-7.1	--
MLS Average Resale Prices	24.3	-1.4	-9.9	-3.7	-4.2	-7.4	-10.0	-9.2	-10.4
Edmonton	34.3	-2.0	-7.8	-8.6	-2.0	-5.7	-4.5	-8.7	-10.1
Calgary	18.7	-2.9	-11.2	-5.6	-6.0	-9.4	-11.4	-10.8	-11.3
Retail Sales	9.3	-0.2	-6.3	3.1	-5.9	-7.8	-6.3	--	--
New Motor Vehicle Sales	3.3	-7.3	-29.0	-2.6	-11.6	-23.6	-22.5	-35.4	--
Business Sector									
Public and Private Investment[5]	9.1	3.6	-14.0	--	--	--	--	--	--
Mining and oil and gas[5]	0.3	-1.4	-28.2	--	--	--	--	--	--
Rigs Drilling	-35.2	-2.1	-42.5	18.3	3.5	-10.2	-24.4	-43.9	-60.8
Goods Exports (customs based)	5.3	33.2	-28.7	43.5	16.4	-7.9	-27.3	-30.2	--
Energy	4.4	40.9	-33.2	50.8	18.0	-7.9	-31.5	-35.1	--
Agriculture	9.8	28.6	0.0	31.5	35.8	16.8	-3.4	3.6	--
Total Farm Cash Receipts (quarterly)	11.9	15.2	--	--	--	8.5 (Q4)	--	--	--
Manufacturing Shipments	1.9	6.9	-14.0	7.7	-4.6	-8.2	-13.4	-14.6	--
Wholesale Trade	4.5	10.9	1.8	14.8	7.4	13.5	1.8	--	--
Building Permits	13.4	-16.5	-61.0	-43.8	-14.7	-29.1	-52.5	-67.5	--
Residential	10.7	-31.5	-70.2	-35.2	-42.2	-37.2	-67.0	-72.5	--
Non-residential	17.1	3.7	-52.8	-50.6	24.5	-21.4	-40.2	-62.9	--

Government of Alberta
Finance and Enterprise

* YTD – year-to-date represents the change since the beginning of the year compared to the same period in the previous year.

[1] Quarterly; annual numbers are presented on a census year basis (July 1 - June 30). The January population estimate is also the 2009 year-to-date value.

[2] The average weekly earnings series was extensively revised on March 31, 2009 and is no longer comparable with numbers in previous Bulletins

[3] Total income earning in Alberta including wages and salaries, and supplementary income.

[4] Average of Calgary and Edmonton.

[5] 2009 based on initial investment intentions, 2008 preliminary actuals, and 2007 actuals

Sources: All data is from Statistics Canada except Housing Starts (Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation), MLS Average Resale Prices (Canadian Real Estate Association) and Rigs Drilling (Canadian Association of Oilwell Drilling Contractors).

Alberta

CURRENT ECONOMIC INDICATORS, BY PROVINCE

	Canada	Nfld.	P.E.I.	N.S.	N.B.	Que.	Ont.	Man.	Sask.	Alta.	B.C.
Conference Board Forecast (Winter 2009)											
Real GDP Growth											
2007 (actuals, Statistics Canada)	**2.7%**	9.1%	2.4%	1.7%	1.7%	2.7%	2.3%	3.3%	2.5%	**3.1%**	3.0%
2008	***0.7%***	1.0%	1.2%	1.6%	1.1%	1.0%	0.0%	2.7%	5.4%	**0.6%**	1.0%
2009	***-0.5%***	-2.6%	0.6%	-0.3%	0.2%	-0.4%	-1.2%	1.0%	1.6%	**-0.5%**	-0.1%
Population (As of January 1, 2009)											
Population	**33,504,680**	508,990	140,402	939,531	748,319	7,782,561	12,986,857	1,213,815	1,023,810	**3,632,483**	4,419,974
Annual Growth Rate[a]	***1.21%***	0.24%	1.25%	0.25%	0.23%	0.86%	1.05%	1.11%	1.50%	**2.58%**	1.70%
Net Interprovincial Migration											
2008 Census Year (July 1, 2007 to June 30, 2008)		1,299	42	-117	-325	-12,399	-16,522	-503	8,067	**10,010**	11,458
4th Quarter (October 1, 2008 to December 31, 2008)		292	-503	108	264	-2,139	-6,517	249	949	**6,198**	1,453
Employment											
Level Change (000s)[b]	**-232.3**	-7.6	-1.5	8.8	-2.4	-62.6	-143.4	5.7	14.5	**4.4**	-48.2
Percent Change[b]	***-1.4%***	-3.7%	-2.3%	2.0%	-0.7%	-1.6%	-2.2%	1.0%	2.9%	**0.2%**	-2.1%
Unemployment Rate, 2009 avg	**7.5**	14.7	12.1	8.8	8.8	7.8	8.4	4.7	4.4	**4.9**	6.4
Participation Rate, 2009 avg	***67.4***	59.1	67.5	64.8	64.9	65.2	67.7	69.6	70.5	**74.8**	65.8
Average Weekly Earnings (SA)											
January 2009	**823.71**	772.88	677.87	731.21	741.02	749.98	851.40	765.96	802.43	**955.35**	798.70
% Increase[c]	***3.2%***	4.1%	4.3%	4.1%	4.0%	-0.1%	2.9%	4.9%	6.3%	**7.9%**	3.4%
2009 Wage Settlements										**1.5%**	
CPI Inflation											
March Annual	**1.2%**	0.5%	-0.2%	0.0%	0.2%	0.8%	1.8%	1.1%	1.8%	**0.9%**	1.1%
Excluding Shelter	**0.9%**	0.1%	0.7%	-0.1%	0.3%	0.5%	1.1%	0.2%	0.2%	**1.1%**	1.4%
Housing Starts (000s)											
SAAR February 2009	**154.7**	3.1	0.5	4.2	3.7	44.5	64.1	3.9	3.8	**12.9**	14.0
Retail Sales											
Percent Change[d]	**-4.5%**	-1.1%	-0.5%	-1.3%	-0.8%	-2.4%	-5.4%	-2.9%	0.3%	**-6.3%**	-6.9%
2008 Retail Sales Growth	**3.2%**	7.8%	4.9%	4.5%	4.9%	4.9%	3.3%	7.1%	10.4%	**-0.2%**	0.2%
Manufacturing Shipments											
Percent Change[d]	**-18.7%**	-35.0%	-0.6%	-17.2%	-27.2%	-12.4%	-22.7%	-11.4%	-9.0%	**-14.6%**	-21.1%

a. Over the past 12 months
b. February 2009 Y/Y change, unadjusted for seasonal effects
c. Updated to February 2009
d. February 2009 Y/Y change, unadjusted for seasonal effects
SA-Seasonally Adjusted
Source: Statistics Canada, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation and Conference Board of Canada